Toward a New Era of Reconciliation with First Nations: A Progress Report

November 2003

BRITISH COLUMBIA

105-01400/

Esquimalt Economic Measures Fund Announcement, April 2003

Through the $40-million Economic Measures Fund, the province has already provided $25 million toward 113 projects that support increased First Nations participation in forestry, tourism, oil and gas, aquaculture and economic development related to the 2010 Olympics.

Fulfilling Our Commitments to First Nations

Two and a half years ago, the province began working to fulfil its New Era commitments to forge a new relationship with B.C. First Nations, including commitments to:

- Fast-track treaty talks to conclude fair treaties.
- Double the First Citizens' Fund to support native friendship centres, student bursaries and economic development programs.
- Increase program funding to solve urban challenges and build capacity.

Considerable progress has been made in many areas:

- Three Agreements-in-Principle completed and two more pending – the most progress toward B.C. treaties in over a century.
- Over 260 treaty-related measure, economic measure, forestry direct award, oil and gas consultation and parkland management agreements.
- A doubled, $72-million First Citizens' Fund that now supports B.C.'s commitment to increase efforts to protect and promote aboriginal languages.
- A Memorandum of Understanding that strengthens aboriginal child protection.

This progress report highlights these and other achievements toward a new relationship with – and a better life for – B.C. First Nations.

Forging a New Relationship

"We are enhanced as a people when we celebrate our diversity and build on all we have in common... Nowhere is that truer than with governments' relations with First Nations."

– 2003 Throne Speech

The province's efforts to materially improve the quality of life, opportunities, education and health of aboriginal families have been shaped by:

- Recognition of challenges affecting First Nations.
- Reconciliation, consultation and accommodation where rights may be affected.
- Renewal of First Nations' social and economic opportunities.

Founding A New Relationship on Strong, Open Communication

Key to all our successes to date is a renewed and expanded commitment to keeping dialogue flowing and relations building, through:

- Three of the first-ever annual meetings between the First Nations Summit and cabinet.
- The First Citizens' Forum, established by the province to foster dialogue on social and economic issues with aboriginal organizations, elders and youth.

Revitalizing Treaty Negotiations

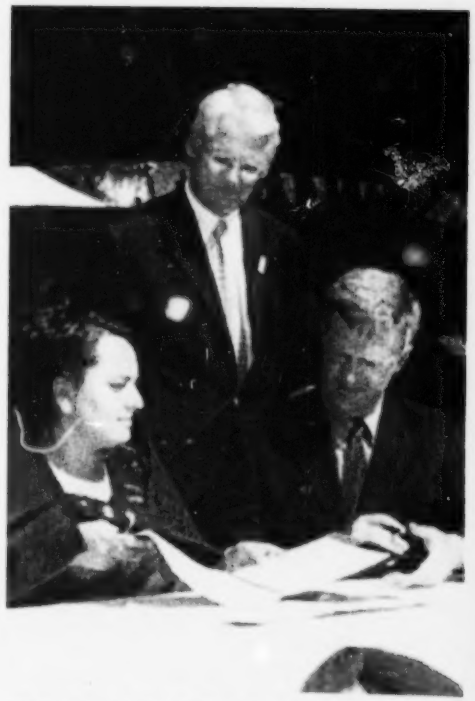
New approaches to treaty negotiations have resulted in three Agreements-in-Principle, more draft AIPs and 38 treaty-related measures – all creating new certainty.

By empowering provincial negotiators to take bold steps to advance treaty negotiations, B.C. has:

- Signed three AIPs and advanced two toward signing.
- Provided a treaty land offer of 20 per cent of the Queen Charlotte Islands, to stimulate long-stalled negotiations with the Haida Nation.
- Funded $1.8 million for 38 treaty-related measures over two years, plus $500,000 for 17 interim measures in the government's first year.

"Signing the Agreement-in-Principle is an important step for our people and for all the people in the Prince George region and throughout British Columbia."

- Chief Barry Seymour
of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation



AIP Signing with Lheidli T'enneh, July 2003

In July, the province signed its second Agreement-in-Principle, with the Lheidli T'enneh, in Prince George. The province has also signed AIPs with the Maa-nulth and Sliammon First Nations and is recommending AIPs with the Tsawwassen and Snuneymuxw.

New Involvement in Resource Development

Fishermen, Northwestern B.C.

The province is working with coastal First Nations to inventory fin-fish sites and develop aquaculture as a growing source of coastal jobs.

To create new economic certainty, the province is directly involving First Nations in decisions around land-use management. Results to date include:

- Over 90 agreements supporting resource development.
- A co-management framework with the Haida Nation, expected to open up economic opportunities while protecting environmental, spiritual and cultural values.
- A management agreement enabling the Mamalilikulla, the 'Namgis and the Tlowitsis First Nations from Hanson Island to approve recreation and tourism tenures, creating new opportunities.
- A new co-management agreement with the Heiltsuk First Nation to ensure new tourism and conservation opportunities.

Building Capacity in Aquaculture

Many First Nations want to pursue opportunities in aquaculture and marine food production. To further these opportunities, the province is:

- Determining acceptable shellfish siting and production levels and training First Nations members to conduct assessments. Fifteen pilot projects are underway.
- Doubling the Crown land available for shellfish aquaculture within 10 years, which will lead to up to 1,100 more industry jobs.
- Helping First Nations to inventory fin-fish sites and develop an aquaculture business strategy.

"Shellfish aquaculture is a good fit for Nuu-chah-nulth communities. We look forward to continuing our work with government and industry."

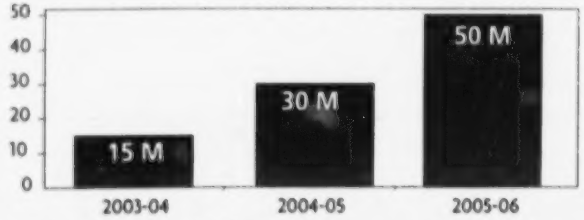
- Archie Little, northern region co-chair for the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

A New Role in Revitalizing Forestry

The province has increased timber access and committed to share more forestry revenues with First Nations, to strengthen stability and certainty for all forestry stakeholders. New First Nations jobs and opportunities are resulting from:

- $95 million in forest revenue sharing over three years and more than doubling – to eight per cent – the allowable annual cut for First Nations.
- Direct invitations to apply for timber rights. Since September 2002, 14 First Nations have been invited to apply for over 2.6 million cubic metres.
- Competitive tenure awards. For example, the Quatsino, Kwakiutl and Tlatlasikwala First Nations won a seven-year timber-sale licence with an annual allowable cut of 43,345 cubic metres.
- The first-ever Minister of Forests' workshops on increasing First Nations' participation in forestry, which explore issues like joint ventures with industry.

Revenue sharing to create First Nations jobs



B.C. has committed $95 million in revenue sharing to help First Nations participate in forestry.

New Opportunities in Oil and Gas

As B.C.'s energy industry continues to boom – with the largest-ever monthly sale of oil and gas rights in September 2003 – B.C. has pioneered a training and employment agreement for northeastern First Nations. The province and chiefs of the Treaty 8 First Nations have created unprecedented opportunities in oil and gas, including:

- $19.2 million to support seven consultation agreements since 2001.
- Funding for many scientific, community and environmental projects through the Oil and Gas Commission's $5-million environment fund.

Offshore oil and gas offers enormous potential to further opportunities for communities in northwestern B.C. and on Vancouver Island. The province is honouring its commitment to work directly with First Nations in planning how this resource can be developed in a way that benefits both aboriginal and non-aboriginal British Columbians.

"The Northeast Aboriginal Business Centre is a great beginning for Treaty 8 people. Building with government, industry and business partnerships is the path to success and dreams for all of us."

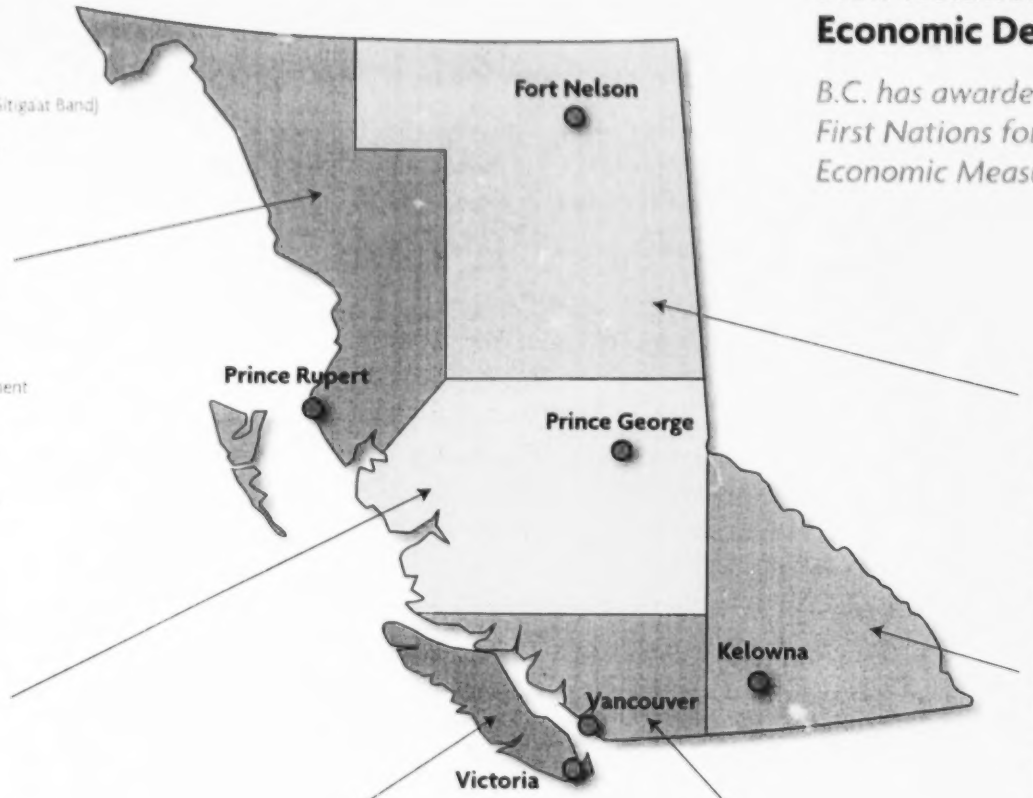
- Chief Garry Oker of Doig River First Nations

Lheidli T'enneh and the Saik'uz Forest Licence Awards, March 2003

Forest licences for 600,000 cubic metres, awarded to the Lheidli T'enneh and Saik'uz First Nations to help fight the mountain pine beetle infestation, are among measures the province has introduced to increase timber access and jobs for B.C. First Nations.

New Relationships are Promoting Economic Development and Jobs

B.C. has awarded over $25 million to First Nations for 113 projects, through the Economic Measures Fund.



Council of the Haida Nation
Gitanmaax Band Council
Gitanyow Band Council
Gitsegukla Indian Band
Gitwangak Band Council
Gitxsan Treaty Society
Hartley Bay Village Council (Gitgaat Band)
Iskut First Nation
Kincolith Village Government
Kispiox Band Council
Kitasoo Band Council
Kitimaat Village Council
Kitkatla First Nation
Kitselas [illegible]
Kitsumkalum Band
Lax Kw'alaams Indian Band
Metlakatla Band
Moricetown Band
New Aiyansh Village Government
Nisga'a Lisims Government
Old Massett Village Council
Skidegate Band Council
Tahltan Indian Band
Taku River Tlingit First Nation
Tsimshian Tribal Council

Burns Lake Indian Band
Canim Lake Indian Band
Canoe Creek Indian Band
Cariboo Tribal Council
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Cheslatta Indian Band
Esketemc First Nation
Heiltsuk Nation
High Bar First Nation
Kluskus Indian Band
Lake Babine Nation
Lheidli-Tenneh First Nation
Tsekani First Nation
Nadleh Whut'en Band
Nak'azdli Indian Band
Saikuz First Nation
Soda Creek Indian Band
Stellat'en First Nation
Tl'azt'en Nation
Ulkatcho First Nation
Wet'suwet'en First Nation
Williams Lake Indian Band
Xeni Gwet'in First Nation
Yekoochee First Nation

Campbell River Indian Band
Chemainus First Nation
Comox Indian Band
Cowichan Tribes
Ditidaht First Nation
Esquimalt First Nation
Hamatla Treaty Society
Hul'quminum Treaty Group
Hupacasath First Nation
Huu-ay-aht First Nation
Kwakiutl Band Council
Lyackson First Nation
Nauʔsa maʔ[illegible]i Council
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Pacheedaht First Nation
Penelakut Indian Band
Quatsino First Nation
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Toquaht Band
Uchucklesaht First Nation
Wei Wai Kai First Nation

Ashcroft Indian Band
Bonaparte Indian Band
Boothroyd Indian Band
Boston Bar First Nation
Cook's Ferry Indian Band
Douglas First Nation
Homalco Indian Band
In-SHUCK-ch Council
Katzie First Nation
Lil'wat First Nation
Lytton First Nation
Metis Provincial Council of BC
Nlakapamux Nation Tribal Council
Oregon Jack Creek Band
Seton Lake Band
Skeetchestn Indian Band
Siska Indian Band
Sliammon First Nation
Soowahlie First Nation
Spuzzum First Nation
Squamish Nation
Ts'kwaylaxw First Nation
Tsleil-Waututh First Nation
Upper Nicola Band
Yale First Nation

Blueberry River First Nation
Doig River First Nation
Fort Nelson First Nation
Halfway River First Nation
Kaska Dena First Nation
Kwadacha Band
Prophet River Band
Chulteau First Nation
Takla Lake First Nation
West Moberly First Nations

Adams Lake Indian Band
Columbia Lake Indian Band
Kamloops Indian Band
Ktunuxa - Kinbasket Tribal Council
Little Shuswap Indian Band
Lower Kootenay Indian Band
Lower Similkameen Indian Band
Neskonlith Indian Band
North Thompson Indian Band
Okanagan Indian Band
Okanagan Nation Alliance
Osoyoos Indian Band
Penticton Indian Band
Shuswap Indian Band
Shuswap Nation Tribal Council
Spallumcheen Indian Band
St. Mary's Indian Band
Tobacco Plains Indian Band
Upper Similkameen Indian Band
Westbank First Nation
Whispering Pines Band

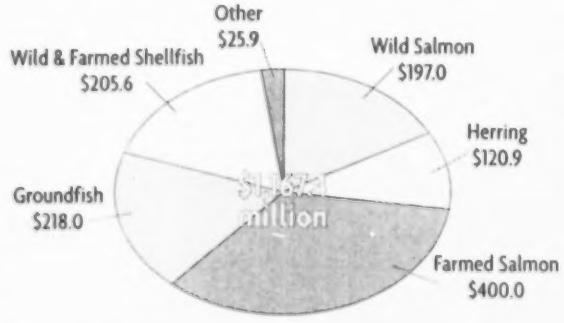
New Resources to Create Economic Opportunities

As First Nations seek new opportunities in many promising sectors, the province is supporting their efforts through the $40-million Economic Measures Fund.

To date, B.C. has awarded over $25 million for 113 projects, to support greater participation in oil and gas, shellfish aquaculture, tourism and forestry, as well as projects related to the 2010 Olympics. Projects include:

- $3 million for the Squamish and Lil'wat First Nations Cultural Centre, which will provide 50 construction jobs and up to 31 peak-season jobs.
- $900,000 to develop partnerships with the private sector to enhance aboriginal job opportunities.

Aquaculture Means More Coastal Jobs



Farmed salmon represented one-third of the wholesale value of B.C.'s catch in 2002.

Opening Up New Opportunities Through Better Transportation

First Nations will benefit from nearly $1.1 billion in upgrading of the province's highways, resource roads, ports and airports over the next three years – plus new approaches that strengthen rail and coastal ferry services. Highlights for First Nations include:

- Completion of the $52-million Nisga'a Highway and the $17.3-million Kincolith connector, which will open up the Nass valley to increased business, tourism and resource development.
- Memorandums of Understanding that will involve the Tsleil-Waututh and Lil'wat First Nations and ongoing consultation with the Squamish First Nation for opportunities arising from Sea-to-Sky Highway upgrading.

"We're looking forward to inviting tourists to come up and experience Nisga'a hospitality and one of the most beautiful drives in B.C."

- Dr. Joseph Gosnell, president of the Nisga'a Nation

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre Unveiling, June 2003

Economic Measures Fund allocations support aboriginal tourism initiatives like this centre in Whistler, which will provide new, ongoing tourism jobs and showcase contemporary and traditional First Nations' cultures to visitors from around the world.

Kincolith Extension Highway Opening, May 2003

The 29-kilometre road linking Greenville and Kincolith is part of nearly $70 million in highway investments that will increase business, tourism and resource development in the Nass valley.

www.FirstVoices.com

FirstVoices.com Language Preservation Program, Launched June 2003

By supporting this innovative, Internet-based program, the province is helping aboriginal people to maintain a connection with their language, heritage and culture. In all, the province has allocated over $2.8 million to aboriginal language preservation.

New Resources to Support Aboriginal Entrepreneurs, Students and Culture

In the spirit of reconciliation and renewed respect, B.C. has doubled the First Citizen's Fund to support aboriginal business development and heritage preservation.

The First Citizen's Fund now provides loans to approximately 140 aboriginal businesses and student bursaries to 125 students each year. It also supports friendship centres and elders' travel to conferences and workshops.

Doubling the fund to $72 million has expanded support for aboriginal entrepreneurism, job-creation and culture through:

- Business development centres that help plan and mentor new businesses. Within months of opening in 2003, the Cranbrook office had 100 clients and the Fort St. John office, 150 clients.
- Bladerunners, which provides on-the-job construction training for at-risk youth. A new partnership with developers is expanding participation by 30 per cent, to 120 youth.
- Support for about 40 community-initiated language preservation projects each year and FirstVoices.com, an innovative, Internet-based program to preserve aboriginal languages. To date, the province has allocated over $2.8 million to aboriginal language preservation.

A New Relationship to Revitalize First Nations' Health and Education

B.C. is acting to address health challenges that have impacted the success and well-being of aboriginals for decades, by:

- Providing $10 million to support aboriginal health programs through regional health authorities.
- Mentoring new aboriginal nurses and helping aboriginal people with some health-related education or experience to pursue higher-level nursing programs.
- Funding nine aboriginal mental health liaison workers across B.C., plus healing programs that address addiction and other issues for aboriginal women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.
- Developing, with the First Nations Chiefs' Health Committee, the B.C. First Nations Health Handbook, a more user-friendly and culturally appropriate version of the B.C. Health Guide.

Dedicating Extra Funding to Aboriginal Students' Success

The province is also working to further the educational achievement of aboriginal people. B.C. is dedicating $44 million – $950 for every aboriginal student in the province – to improve aboriginal students' outcomes in school, supporting:

- Aboriginal enhancement agreements – collaborative partnerships between aboriginal communities and school districts that involve shared decision-making and goal-setting. The province is working to establish these agreements in all 60 B.C. school districts by 2005.
- Higher graduation rates. The number of aboriginals graduating from B.C. high-schools increased 13 per cent between 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Stimulating Post-Secondary Interests and Ensuring Access

Since 2001, the province has funded 85 special projects to help more than 2,000 aboriginal learners to further their education in areas ranging from health and social work to science, forestry, aboriginal languages and trades.

B.C. is supporting many innovative aboriginal post-secondary programs, including:

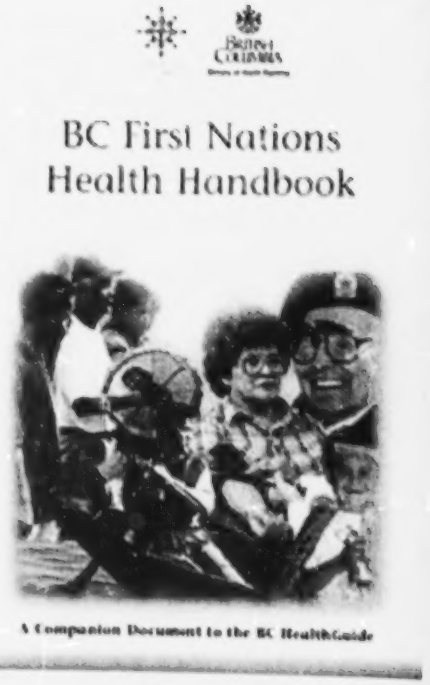
- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and Simon Fraser University's Aboriginal Community Economic Development Bachelor of Arts Degree Program.
- Capilano College's Aboriginal Film and Television Program.

The province is also working to encourage aboriginal interest and achievement in careers that will directly benefit First Nations communities:

- Aboriginal Youth First, which provides leadership and employment skills, has helped over 250 urban and rural youth, many of whom now work in recreation and adventure tourism.
- To increase the number of social workers and child and youth workers skilled in meeting the needs of aboriginal communities and families, the province has funded an extra 20 student spaces in Bachelor of Social Work and Bachelor of Arts, Child and Youth Care programs.
- B.C. is helping to bring high-speed Internet to Nisga'a communities for the first time, opening up new educational and economic opportunities.

"Our primary concern is to improve the health of B.C.'s First Nations. This handbook is a positive and welcome step as we work with the province to make our goal a reality."

- Margery McRae, chair of the First Nations Chiefs' Health Committee



B.C. First Nations Health Handbook, Released January 2003

This handbook – a more user-friendly and culturally appropriate version of the B.C. Health Guide – was developed with and for First Nations to help improve the health and well-being of aboriginal people across B.C.

A New Relationship to Strengthen Child Protection

Memorandum of Understanding For Aboriginal Children, September 2002

The province is making unprecedented efforts to strengthen family ties, cultural awareness and childhood development among aboriginal children.

Aboriginal children and youth are benefiting from efforts to strengthen their connection with their roots and address developmental and other challenges that affect them.

Children's roots are forever, and their safety and well-being are paramount for the province and their communities. A Memorandum of Understanding that underscores these values has resulted in:

- A joint aboriginal management committee, representing all major aboriginal organizations and the province, preparing to transfer child-protection and family-development resources and services to regional aboriginal authorities.
- A review of the files of 2,700 aboriginal children in government care, to identify those who may benefit from returning to their family and, for others, ways to strengthen their connection with their community and culture.

"The Parties agree that there is a disproportionate number of aboriginal children in care in British Columbia. They agree that this number must be reduced and the children should be returned to their communities where it is appropriate to do so."

- Memorandum of Understanding for Aboriginal Children

Improving Children's Early Development and Outcomes

Identifying and addressing developmental challenges early in children's lives is critical, and as a group, aboriginal children face certain challenges at disproportionately high levels. To address more of these challenges earlier and more effectively, B.C. has dedicated:

- Over $6.5 million in 2002-03 to early childhood development programs in 37 urban and on-reserve aboriginal communities.
- $2.2 million to researching culturally appropriate early childhood development services and increasing awareness of the importance of early childhood development among aboriginal communities and leaders.
- Over $1 million to combat fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.
- An advisor to help develop culturally appropriate programs for children under 3 with developmental disabilities or at risk of developmental delays.

A Vital Role in the 2010 Games

First Nations played a crucial role in securing the 2010 Olympics for B.C., and now, the province is working to ensure they share in the benefits this world-class event will bring.

Planning is underway now to maximize First Nations' involvement in and benefits from ongoing preparation for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games:

- The Squamish and Lil'wat First Nations have signed an Olympic legacy agreement related to training, housing, youth sports and Olympic infrastructure. The two First Nations will help to ensure development of the Whistler Nordic Centre respects their sensitive areas and land-use plans.
- Memorandums of Understanding and consultations pertaining to Sea-to-Sky improvements and the Games support the involvement of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Lil'wat First Nations in economy, job and capacity-building opportunities.

In addition, B.C. remains committed to furthering partnerships and agreements that cultivate growing aboriginal tourism opportunities – especially as we prepare to welcome the world in 2010.

MD
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VANCOUVER 2010

"The successful 2010 Winter Olympic Games bid by Vancouver and Whistler provides a tremendous opportunity to showcase British Columbia, its tremendous pool of talent, cultural diversity and diverse geography."

Grand Chief Edward John,
First Nations Summit

Team BC Members, 2002 Aboriginal Games

2010 LegaciesNow, a provincewide sport-development program, is supporting sport legacies in the years leading up to the 2010 Games. The Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Association received a $15,000 grant for sport development for Aboriginal Team BC that will see aboriginal athletes participate in the North American Indigenous Games through 2005.

"The future will be forged in partnership with First Nations - not in denial of their history, heritage and culture. It will be won in recognition of First Nations' constitutional rights and title - not lost for another generation because we failed to act. It will be earned through reconciliation and mutual respect. It will be built with bold new approaches that will materially improve First Nations' quality of life - before and after treaties are concluded."

- Throne Speech, February 2003

For more information on services to First Nations:

Treaty Negotiations Office

Aboriginal Directorate/First Citizens Fund

Job Opportunities in the Forest Sector

Aboriginal Programs – Ministry of Education

Aboriginal Programs – Ministry of Advanced Education

Aboriginal Health

First Peoples' Cultural Foundation

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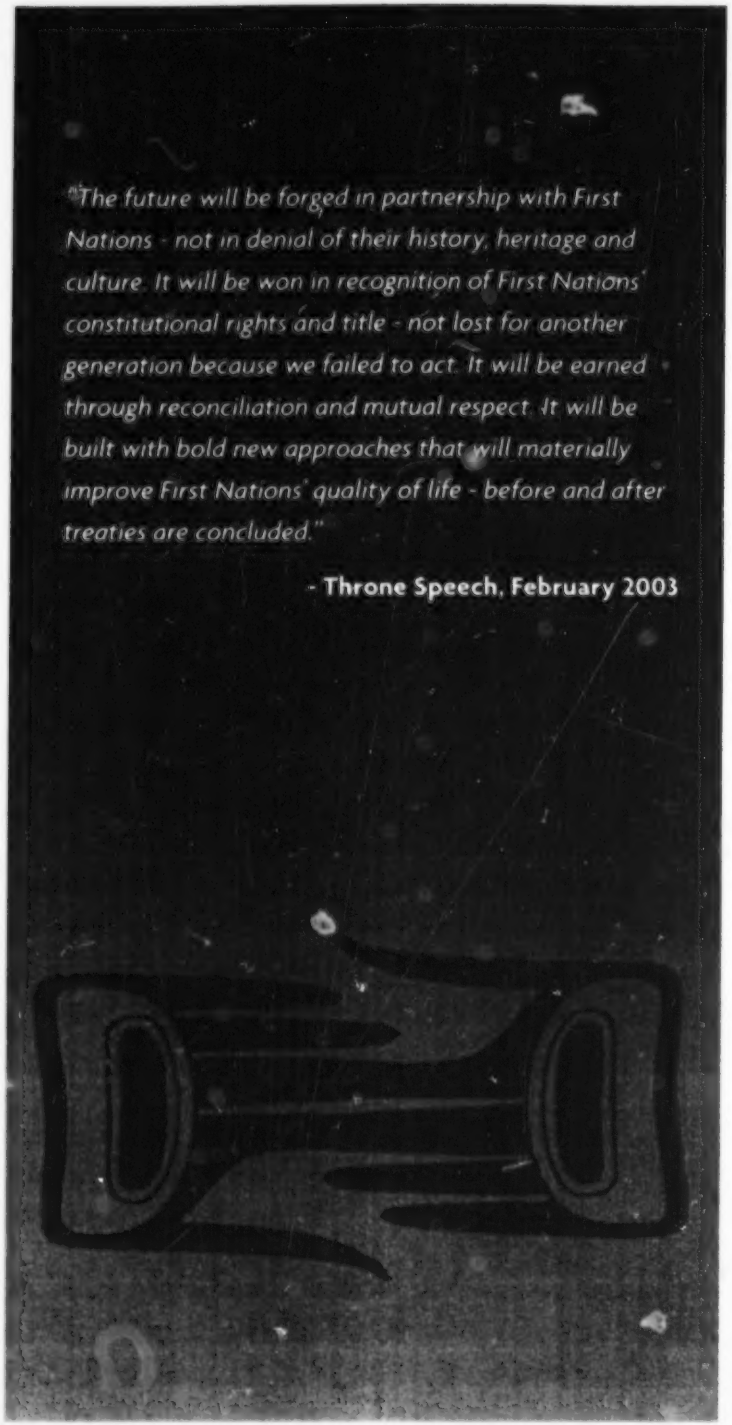

For more information on services to First Nations:

Treaty Negotiations Office
Victoria: 250 356-8281
Toll-free provincewide: 1 800 880-1022
www.gov.bc.ca/tno/

Aboriginal Directorate/First Citizens Fund
Victoria: 250 356-5276
www.mcaws.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal_dir/index.htm

Job Opportunities in the Forest Sector
www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/firefighter/equity.htm

Aboriginal Programs – Ministry of Education
Victoria: 250-356-1891
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/

Aboriginal Programs – Ministry of Advanced Education
www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/

Aboriginal Health
Ministry of Health Planning
Victoria: 250 952-3151
www.healthplanning.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/

First Peoples' Cultural Foundation
Aboriginal Languages
Victoria: 250 361-3456
www.fpcf.ca

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